

THE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE OF NEW YORK STATE

Bulletin #20

December 2013

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Member,

Year 2013 is ending with the announcement that Governor Cuomo has listened carefully and evaluated the many concerns expressed regarding the proposed closure of several of our upstate Psychiatric Centers. They will not be closed, and a plan will be implemented to meet client, family and other concerns. Coincidentally, the DRC Board of Directors was in the process of sending him and others a resolution, passed unanimously, against closure. What great news!

The DRC is starting 2014 with an intense focus on the school funding and reform issues that affect our children and grandchildren. The Forum on January 18 will be a terrific opportunity to educate ourselves more fully in our ability to advocate effectively for them. Please see all information on the Education Forum below. Must RSVP as space is limited.

Our 2014 Conference promises to be equal if not even more exciting than our previous ones. You will of course have the opportunity to hear from and hopefully chat with our full slate of NYS candidates and leaders/representatives of the Legislature and State Committee.



SAVE THE DATE

2014 DRC CONFERENCE

April 25th and 26th

HILTON ALBANY

Formerly Crowne Plaza



40 Lodge St

Albany, NY 12207

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Senator Schumer has yet to miss a DRC conference and we hope that Senator Gillibrand can also attend – she usually does! Our agenda will focus on taking back the House and State Senate, but we will also have a session with a focus on women and we will repeat our session for young Democrats (joined by older Democrats, of course), and with encore remarks by Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick. The speeches, the receptions, the networking; they will all be there!

Planning for a Lobby Day in Albany is under way. We will focus on the Public School issues and continue our push for I-98.

Our intention is to hear your issues and bring them to the fore as much as possible.

Let us hear from you!

We continue to offer speakers, technical assistance and support.

With much appreciation for the work you all do and a Happy and Prosperous New Year,

Irene

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SAVE THE DATE

EDUCATION FORUM

January 18, 2014 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Pensabene's Casa Grande, 135 State Fair Blvd., Syracuse, NY 13204

As rural education has been a signature issue of the DRC, Irene Stein has secured this important opportunity for our membership to participate in this Education Forum.

- Forum will be held at **Pensabene's Casa Grande Blvd, 135 State Fair Blvd. Syracuse, NY 13204**
- 1:00 – 2:00 PM Richard Timbs will speak on NYS public school funding
- 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM Anthony Bottar, Vice Chancellor, Board of Regents and Maria Neira, Vice President of NYSUT will discuss Common Core and Testing

Please save the date and RSVP by emailing phildem@rochester.rr.com as space is limited.

Next DRC Meeting

January 18th – 10:00 AM Pensabene's Casa Grande Blvd, 135 State Fair Blvd., Syracuse, NY 13204

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO.....

December 8th Board Meeting

A meeting of the DRC Board was held on December 8th at Denny's in Syracuse. The following business was conducted.

2014 Spring Conference News and Updates

Jane says the 2014 Conference is our best opportunity for strategic networking in rural NY. Our Congressional and State legislative districts are often huge areas spanning multiple DRC counties. We're planning an aggressive program designed to counteract the gerrymandered districts by unifying Democrats as we kick off the 2014 election season.

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We're anticipating great turnout this year, and we're hoping that each county will invite and encourage young Democrats, new candidates, and potential candidates to attend this exciting weekend. The 2014 Conference is a great way to share the excitement and

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depth of the DRC resources. Bring your whole Committee! Registration information will be available after the New Year. Jane presented a first draft of an agenda for our exciting 2014 Spring Conference – **Democrats are in the House and the Senate**. The schedule is still very tentative as responses from our elected officials arrival times are in flux at this early date. Here is the tentative schedule of workshops and events ;

Friday Afternoon, April 25, 2014

2:00 – 6:00 – Registration and credentialing

3:00 – NY State Senate – Targeting Races

4:00 – Networking by State Senate districts

5:00 – DRC Women's agenda

6:00 - 7:00 – Governor's Welcome Reception

7:00 – 9:00 – Dinner with NY State elected officials

9:00 – 10:00 – Dessert reception with Attorney General Schneiderman

10:00 – Young Democrats Nightcap

Saturday, April 26, 2014

7:30 – 8:30 – Registration and Credentialing

8:00 – 9:00 – Breakfast with Comptroller Tom Di Napoli

9:00 – 10:00 – DRC Business Meeting

10:00 – 11:30 – Democrats are in the House – Panel discussions – Electing democrats in rural Districts

11:30 – 12:30 – Networking by rural Congressional Districts

12:30 – Luncheon

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2:00 – Job Fair and Straw Poll (if necessary)

The Friday night dinner will include the following choices – chicken, fish or vegetarian entrée with salad, coffee, tea and water.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit / Finance - Cindy Emmer

The current balance is \$3,750.13 in checking and \$10,557.76 in savings for total cash on hand of \$14,307.89.

Cindy proposed that a survey be conducted to poll the membership on how DRC funds should be allocated. A draft of the survey questionnaire was presented and after some language changes the modifications were approved. A suggestion to utilize 'Survey Monkey', an online survey site will make taking and recording the results of the survey easy for our members. Please look for the survey in early February.

Issues Committee - Dawn Rivers

Upon the news that the NYS legislature was proposing the closure of some state psychiatric centers, a resolution to encourage legislators to keep these centers open in Ogdensburg, Elmira and Broome County was proposed by the issues committee. After an amendment to change some of the language, the resolution passed unanimously. We are now happy to report that as of this writing these centers will remain open and the issues committee has suspended sending letters to both the legislature, the Governor's office, PEF and CSEA. The DRC is pleased with this development as these services are vital in rural counties and provide good jobs that are important to the economic health of these communities. Chairwoman Stein has sent a letter of thanks to the Governor's office.

Communications - Don Ackerman

First and foremost as we continue to move more aggressively into social networking, please if you have not already -- 'like' our facebook page by searching NYS Democratic Rural Conference or follow this Link; www.facebook.com/pages/Democratic-Rural-Conference-of-New-York-State/162050418621

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Jeanne Crane will be contacting County Chairs and Lorie Longhany has acquired our distribution list so the communications committee will be reaching out to better serve our membership.

Youth Recruitment and Retainment Committee – Jason Clark

Jason reports that after a few conference calls with his committee, a Youth Advisory Board has been established and he has asked them to develop a Mission Statement and articulate what they wish to accomplish. They continue to try and reach Young Dems. If you have Young Dems involved with your organization please put them in touch with Jason (see his email contact on our contact page below).

Political Committee – Jim Testani

Lobby Day is the primary focus of the Political Committee. Jim reported that we would not be able to meet with legislators in their offices due to the legal nature of the DRC as a political organization. Lobby Day can only be on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday in the month of February. Discussion focused on how and where to meet with legislators as well as whether we meet with the Independent Democratic Caucus. On the issue of education funding, it was decided that we will meet with representatives of all caucuses – Democratic, Republican and Independent Democratic Caucus. On the I-98 corridor it was agreed that we also meet with the Governor's office.

I-98 - Mark Ballardini

The I-98 corridor will be on the agenda for Lobby Day and continues to be a signature issue of the DRC

CONTACT INFORMATION AND MEMBER SERVICES

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Speakers Bureau

The following DRC members are available as speakers at DRC County Events

Irene Stein, Cindy Emmer, Bill Wood and Phil Jones.

Mentoring Services

The DRC Executive Committee has many experienced County Chairs. We are available to mentor and provide support to new County Chairs.

Dues

Dues are \$10 for 2014. Checks are payable to the DRC c/o Cindy Emmer, 858 Davis St., Elmira, NY 14901. Dues can be paid with Conference registration.

PREPARED AND FORMATTED BY: Lorie Longhany

EDITOR: Irene Stein, Doris Kirsch and Phil Jones

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